

REGULAR NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 23, 2008

The North Providence School Committee met on January 23, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. in the Library at the High School. Members present were Vice Chairman Reall, Mr. DaSilva, Mr. Marciano, Mr. Cataldi, Mr. Martinelli, Mr. Iannetta, and Mr. Palmieri. Also present was Superintendent Ottaviano and Mr. Scungio. Ms. Celona, Mr. Gerardi, Mr. Lynch and Mr. Milazzo were present for the regular session only.

Motion by Mr. Palmieri, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to recess the regular session and go into Executive Session at 5:03 p.m. for the purpose of Obtaining and Considering Legal Advice re the 2006/07 surplus and 2006/2007 Audit; Personnel Subcommittee/By Law Amendment Legal Advice; Claims Request by the Town; and Report on Personnel Matter – submission of information..

The meeting reconvened at 6:35 p.m. It began by saluting the flag.

Next, Vice Chairman Reall asked for a moment of silence.

Vice Chairman Reall next spoke about the procedure that she would like to follow for the meeting. There will be five minutes allowed to speak on a subject. The Mayor has asked to address the Committee. She asked the Committee if there was any objection to moving him up on the Agenda. Hearing none, she asked the Mayor to address the Committee.

Mayor Lombardi stated that he asked to address the Committee to discuss the situation concerning the claims that are being submitted. He felt that there seems to be no controls. He would like to centralize the claims through the Town. By centralizing the claims through the Town, they would be handled in an expedient manner. He next spoke about a Report from the Trust. He passed out copies to the members of the Committee. He stated that, in his opinion, the Town as a whole needs more control. There are some losses that date back to March of 2007. Many jobs have not been completed. He spoke about the fact the member, which is the Town, is hiring the contractor and according to the report, all the occurrences were on the same day. He asked the Committee to review the Report. For the reasons that he stated, he respectfully requested that the School Department agree to put all the claims through the Administration Office at the Town Hall. He also requested that the School Department join all the other Town Departments that have agreed to centralize the claims and all the Department Reports. Vice Chairman Reall asked the

Mayor if the members of the Committee could ask questions? Mr. Palmieri asked if the Committee is supposed to be informed of what is going on with the Trust? Superintendent Ottaviano explained that there was a memo that went out that went through the Trust. There was no vote taken because it went through the Trust. Mr. Marciano asked the Mayor if he was asking the Committee to review the Report and get back to him? The Mayor stated that he would like the Committee's support for what he is trying to do and that he was passing on the

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information that was given to him by the Trust. Mr. Marciano asked if the claims from the School Department would go through the Director of Administration and how long it would take? The Mayor stated that the claims would be processed through the Director of Administration within twenty-four hours. Mr. DaSilva asked the Mayor if he was looking at this as a consolidation of resources the same way as the

cutting of the fields and the sanding of the lots? Mayor Lombardi stated that it is a consolidation of resources. Mr. Cataldi felt that he would like a chance to digest this information and ask some questions of the personnel. Mayor Lombardi felt that the Town can get things done faster and less expensive. Mr. Cataldi asked what would happen if the Committee decided to consolidate and then change their minds? Mayor Lombardi asked the Committee to give him six months or a year to see how it works. Mr. Iannetta felt that his questions were asked and answered by Mr. DaSilva and Mr. Cataldi's questions. He read the portion of the letter regarding timelines and felt that he is willing to listen to all the options. Mayor Lombardi next stated that he wanted to make it clear that the Town does not recognize your autonomy. Helen Reall asked the Mayor to repeat his statement. The Mayor corrected himself and stated that the Town does recognize the Committee's autonomy. Mrs. Reall felt that she would need more assurances that it would be a collaboration. Mayor Lombardi said that he likes to move very quick and that government moves way too slow for him. Mrs. Reall asked if the Superintendent would know the when, where and how? Mr. Martinelli asked the Mayor for clarification as the member being the Town. He spoke about a few months back when the Committee was told that the insurer picks who it wants for the repairs? Mayor Lombardi stated that he is simply saying what was reported to the Town. The report says that the member hired the contractor. The report states that the School Department hired the contractor. Mr. Martinelli made a motion that all claims pertaining to the Trust be sent

to the Director of Administration and go through the Director of Administration for consistency and that we research the claims that were sent to the School Committee. Mr. Palmieri seconded the motion. Mrs. Reall expressed concern with the fact that if the timelines are not followed, the Trust will not pay the claim. She asked the Mayor for the timelines. Mayor Lombardi stated that he is not here to pressure the School Department. Mr. Cataldi stated that he sees the merit of what the Mayor is trying to do. However, he felt that we need to answer some questions before acting on this. He felt that the Committee should defer it a month to get our questions answered. He felt that he needs time to digest the information. In the meantime, he felt that he has no problem working with the administration. Mayor Lombardi cautioned everyone that we should not hire one particular contractor. Mr. Iannetta concurred with Mr. Cataldi's comments. Mr. Palmieri asked if it has to wait for a whole month. He felt that there should be a special meeting to discuss this. Vice Chairman Reall reminded everyone that the meeting needs to be advertised. Mr. Martinelli stated that, with the Mayor's approval, he would like to withdraw his motion. However, he wanted to go on the record by stating that after reading the report, he would like to get on board immediately. Mr. Martinelli withdrew his motion and requested that a meeting be set up immediately.

Motion by Mr. Martinelli, seconded by Mr. Palmieri and carried to advertise tomorrow for a Special Meeting as soon as possible to discuss this matter and make a determination and that, in the meantime, all claims will be forwarded to the Director of Administration so that they are aware of the claims.

Vice Chairman Reall suggested that the Committee pick a date for the meeting. It was the general consensus of the Committee to schedule the Special Meeting for February 6th, 2008 at 5:00 p.m.

Next on the Agenda was Reorganization of Meeting as a Result of Vacancy. First was the election of officers. Pursuant to the North Providence Charter, the reorganizational meeting was called to order for the purpose of electing a chairman and a vice chairman.

Mr. DaSilva nominated Helen Reall as Chairman of the North Providence School Committee. Mr. Cataldi seconded the nomination.

Mr. Iannetta stated that he was going to nominate Anthony Marciano as Chairman, but he is not interested. Therefore, he would like to

nominate Vito Martinelli as Chairman of the School Committee. Mr. Palmieri seconded the nomination. Vice Chairman Reall asked if there was any further counternominations, any further counternominations, any further counternominations. Hearing none, there was a roll call vote taken on the nomination of Helen Reall. Mr. Marciano, nay; Mr. DaSilva, aye; Mr. Cataldi, aye; Mr. Palmieri, nay; Mr. Martinelli, nay; Mr. Iannetta, nay; and Mrs. Reall, aye. The motion failed by a vote of 4 to 3.

Next was the nomination of Vito Martinelli as Chairman. Mr. Marciano, aye; Mr. DaSilva, nay; Mr. Cataldi, nay; Mr. Palmieri, aye; Mr. Martinelli, aye; Mr. Iannetta, aye; and Mrs. Reall, nay. The motion carried by a vote of 4 to 3. Vice Chairman Reall congratulated Mr. Martinelli and stated that she would like to know if she should continue the meeting or would he like to take over. Mr. Martinelli stated that he would be honored to have Mrs. Reall continue to Chair the meeting.

Next was the nomination for Vice Chairman. Mr. Iannetta nominated Steve Palmieri as Vice Chairman of the North Providence School Committee. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Martinelli. Vice Chairman Reall asked if there was any counternominations, any counternominations, any counternominations. Hearing none, a roll call vote was taken.

Mr. Marciano, aye; Mr. DaSilva, aye; Mr. Cataldi, nay; Mrs. Reall, aye; Mr. Palmieri, aye; Mr. Martinelli, aye; and Mr. Iannetta, aye.

The next item on the Agenda was Correspondence. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was the Superintendent's Report. The first item was NPHS State Classification/District Status. Vice Chairman Reall congratulated Mr. Goho on his most

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precise report. Mr. Goho spoke about the article in the Breeze and asked Mr. Gerardi to comment if there was anything he would like to add. He added that the situation is not as dire as the Journal would lead you to believe. We don't blame anyone. The reason for the label is that special education is included in the numbers. However, it is not just a special education issue.

Next was the Restraint Policy Renewal. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Policy as presented in the packets for the past two months.

Mr. Martinelli asked Mr. Lynch as far as the policy goes, doesn't RI law adequately cover this? Mr. Lynch explained that the Policy mirrors that State Policy and it is required that we have our own Policy.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the policy as presented.

Next was Field Trip Requests. Superintendent Ottaviano turned it over to Mr. Gerardi. Mr. Gerardi recommended approval of the field trips as presented and in accordance with School Committee Policy.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the Field Trip Requests as submitted and in accordance with School Committee Policy.

Next was the Monthly Financial Report. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Monthly Financial Report dated January 23, 2008 as presented.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the Monthly Financial Report dated January 23, 2008 as presented.

Next was the Request for Records Policy. Mr. Martinelli stated that he asked Legal Counsel to sit down with him and that he would like to

defer this to Executive Session next month.

The next item on the Agenda was School Committee Reports. The first item under the School Committee Reports was Recommendation re: 2006/2007 Surplus.

Vice Chairman Reall stated that in accordance with State Law, the School Department has to make the decision of what to do with the surplus money. It was stated in the newspaper last night that it was turned over to the Mayor. The School Department has two options – we could turn it over to the Mayor or we could keep the surplus. The Committee feels that it would help the Town to give the surplus back.

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Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to help the Town by turning the surplus over to the Town.

Next was Employee Recognition. Superintendent Ottaviano asked

that this be placed on the Agenda. During the month of December, one of the custodians was working at the school and heard a person in distress. Everyone is very proud of his actions. The School Committee would like to recognize Richard Marchione for his actions. Superintendent Ottaviano read the recognition citations spoke about the details of what Mr. Marchione did. Mr. Marchione was presented with the Citation of Recognition. Everyone stood to applaud Mr. Marchione and offer congratulations.

Next on the Agenda was the Birchwood Gate. Vice Chairman Reall explained that this was put in the wrong section of the Agenda and should have been placed under the Request to Address the Committee. She asked them to be patient for one more item and then it would be their turn to speak.

Next on the Agenda was Report on Personnel Matter – Submission of Information Relative to Employee from Personnel Subcommittee. Mr. Martinelli asked that this matter be deferred.

Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 3-5. Mr. Floriani spoke about the fact that the School Department is giving the surplus back to the Town and felt that if there is a surplus in the future, it be put aside for full-day kindergarten. Mr. Palmieri asked if there is any possibility we can put it in the budget for next year. He felt that we have to budget for it. Vice Chairman Reall felt that we could put it in under new initiatives. Mr. Marciano spoke about the fact that Dr.

Pallotta was very involved in this and would suggest talking to him. Mr. Martinelli concurred with his colleagues and feels that it is fundamental and an absolute necessity. The children are exposed to so much more now. Mr. Floriani’s daughter talked about the surplus for the last two years and the fact that there will not be money.

Next was Requests to Address the Committee. The first request was by Margaret Mooraghian regarding the Birchwood Gate. Margaret Mooraghian stated that this is the 2nd time that she is before the Committee. She spoke about the mystery of the closed gate and how it keeps getting opened. She requested that the gate be closed when school is not in session. She also requested that the Committee make a recommendation. Mr. Cataldi spoke about the fact that he had a few conversations with Mrs. Mooraghian regarding this issue. The issue comes down to safety versus income. He added that it will be even worse when Lowes opens.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to close the gate when school is not open, including weekends, holidays, and during the summer and to ask Mr. Milazzo to place a sign stating “no thru traffic” when the school is open.

Members of the Committee expressed their agreement with the need to close the gate.

Next was the Request by David Hendricks. He spoke about the fact he appeared before the Committee before to request that something be done to make sure that the leagues comply with the agreement to turn the lights off. The league mismanaged the times of the games and now the Babe Ruth League is requesting four more night games. He next spoke about the fact that there was a game on August 9, 2007 that went until 12:00 a.m., which is way beyond the curfew. He also spoke about the people that are on the microphone. Mr. Marciano felt that we need to establish a very clear policy that there is a curfew and that it needs to be adhered to. He felt that the Committee should take Mr. Hendricks’ suggestions under advisement and adopt a policy. Mr. Hendricks also suggested that a sign be added with the rules of the field and the curfew. Mr. DaSilva spoke about the fact that it is not just the Babe Ruth league. There is also a senior Babe Ruth League. He felt that it is a baseball field issue. Most of the children in the

leagues are from North Providence but there are children from other communities.

The next request was from Mr. Morris regarding cell phones. Mr. Morris spoke on behalf of the North Providence Taxpayers Association about the cell phone issue. He asked to submit six questions to the Committee for them to answer at their convenience. Mr. Cataldi felt that he would like to address this issue right now. He spoke about the last month to six weeks being accused of a lot of wrongdoing and he felt that he would like to answer the allegations. He felt that the only thing that he is guilty of is no documentation. He felt that he would like to make public part of the Minutes of an Executive Session from last month. He also spoke about the police report and read a portion.

Motion by Mr. Martinelli, seconded by Mr. Palmieri and carried to recess the meeting for five minutes for the purpose of obtaining legal advice. Mr. DaSilva opposed the motion.

Mrs. Reall explained to Mr. Morris that the Committee has the questions and will review the questions and get back to him.

The meeting recessed at 8:45 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:55 p.m.

The next request was from Mr. Forti. Mr. Forti asked Councilman

Frank Manfredi to speak on his behalf. Mr. Manfredi spoke about the fact that Mr. Forti is a resident with three children. He and his wife both work. They signed an agreement for the morning and afternoon kindergarten. However, it would be a financial hardship of over \$600.00 per month

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if his daughter has to attend afternoon kindergarten. He asked that the Committee show some compassion and consideration. Vice Chairman Reall stated that, with all due respect, it is a big deal and rules are rules. She felt that it would set a very dangerous precedent.

Mr. Marciano felt that it is not necessary to view Mr. Forti's hardship in public and that sometimes there are extenuating circumstances. He felt that he would be willing to make an exception to the rules.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Martinelli and carried to allow Mr. Forti's daughter an extension to attend a.m. kindergarten based on the fact that there are extenuating circumstances and that it does

not set a precedent.

Mr. Palmieri added that Superintendent Ottaviano did the right thing by following the policy. She was only following the rules.

The next item on the Agenda was New Business.

First was Approval of Bids. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the bid for Air Conditioning System for the NPHS Computer Lab be awarded the the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, Automatic Temperature Controls, Inc.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to award the bid for Air Conditioning System for the NPHS Computer Lab to Automatic Temperature Controls, Inc.

Mr. DaSilva added that he loathes the thought of making the motion if the Mayor will be back. He asked if the Mayor looked at the lab. Superintendent Ottaviano said that he did.

Next was Resignations. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee approve the resignation of Susan Bennett – Business Department Chair – North Providence High School effective January 23, 2008 (Pending Appointment as NPHS Faculty Treasurer)

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to approve the resignation of Susan Bennett - Business Department Chair – North Providence High School effective January 23, 2008 (Pending Appointment as NPHS Faculty Treasurer)

Next was Retirements. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee approve the retirement of Claudia Carr – Math Teacher – NPHS (Pursuant to Article VI Section 10a) effective at the end of the 2008/09 School Year; and Paula George – Grade 2 – Centredale School – Effective at the end of the 2007/08 School Year.

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Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the retirement of Claudia Carr – Math Teacher – NPHS (Pursuant to Article VI Section 10a) effective at the end of the 2008/09 School Year; and Paula George – Grade 2 – Centredale School –

Effective at the end of the 2007/08 School Year.

Next was Leaves of Absence. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Leaves of Absence Requests for Daria Argenti – Grade 4 – Centredale School for an Extension of Unpaid Leave (Pursuant to Article VI, Section 12B of CBA) effective January 22, 2008 through the end of the 2007/08 School Year; and Stacy Coleman – Grade 1 – Marieville School for Paid FMLA effective January 16, 2008 through May 22, 2008 and Unpaid FMLA effective May 23, 2008 through the end of the 2007/08 School Year.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to approve the Leaves of Absence Requests for Daria Argenti – Grade 4 – Centredale School for an Extension of Unpaid Leave (Pursuant to Article VI, Section 12B of CBA) effective January 22, 2008 through the end of the 2007/08 School Year; and Stacy Coleman – Grade 1 – Marieville School for Paid FMLA effective January 16, 2008 through May 22, 2008 and Unpaid FMLA effective May 23, 2008 through the end of the 2007/08 School Year. Mr. Iannetta abstained from voting on the Leave of Absence for Daria Argenti.

Next was Non-Renewals (Layoffs). Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the list of Non-Renewals as submitted in the School Committee packets due to the deadline and the uncertainty of state and federal funding and an abundance of caution.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the list of Non-Renewals as submitted in the School Committee packets due to the deadline and the uncertainty of state and federal funding and an abundance of caution.

Next was Appointments. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee grant advice and consent to the appointments, which were voted on as follows:

Motion by Mr. Iannetta, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to grant advice and consent to the assignment of Susan Bennett – NPHS Faculty Treasurer effective January 23, 2008; Susan Rainone – NPHS Girls Lacrosse Head Coach effective January 24, 2008; and Mary Ann Sanders – Grade 5 1:1 Teacher Assistant Centredale School effective January 24, 2008.

Next was Consideration of Amendment to By Laws of the School Committee.

Motion by Mr. Martinelli, seconded by Mr. Palmieri and carried to submit the Amendment for the 1st reading.

Next was Consideration of NPHS Baseball Coach Position. Mr. Martinelli asked to defer the matter to Mr. Palmieri. Mr. Palmieri felt that there are forty-five children playing on the team and there is a need for another coach. Members of the Committee asked questions regarding the need for the position. Discussion took place with respect to the need for the position and why the coach did not request the position.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to invite the Athletic Director to address the Committee at the February meeting for the purpose of giving information regarding the 3rd coaching position.

Next was Old Business. Mr. Martinelli thanked the Finance Director for the information on the School Department Accounts and felt that the information was acceptable.

Next was Use of Property Requests. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Use of Property Requests as submitted with the additional requests.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to approve the Use of Property Requests as submitted with the understanding that no nighttime games will be approved until the Committee establishes a policy and to approve Option 1 of the Miss Lynn Studio Request. Mr. Martinelli voted nay to the motion for the one usage.

Next was approval of Bills. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the List of Bills as presented.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to approve the January 23, 2008 List of Bills as presented.

Next was Approval of Minutes.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to approve the Minutes of the December 12, 2007 Executive Session Meeting as presented with the corrections and keep closed in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-4-4 and 42-4-5.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the Minutes of the Regular North Providence School Committee Meeting of December 12, 2007 as presented.

Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 7-12. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Pending Business. There

being none,

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**Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Martinelli and carried to
adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Iannetta